

Use of Force

300.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines on the reasonable use of force. While there is no way to specify the exact amount or type of reasonable force to be applied in any situation, every member of this department is expected to use these guidelines to make such decisions in a professional, impartial and reasonable manner.

300.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Deadly Force - Force reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of causing death or very serious injury. Deadly Force is defined in Minn. Stat. § 609.066, Subd. 1., as: “For the purposes of this section, “deadly force” means force which the actor uses with the purpose of causing, or which the actor should reasonably know creates a substantial risk of causing, death or great bodily harm. The intentional discharge of a firearm, other than a firearm loaded with less lethal munitions and used by a peace officer within the scope of official duties, in the direction of another person, or at a vehicle in which another person is believed to be, constitutes deadly force. “Less lethal munitions” means projectiles which are designed to stun, temporarily incapacitate, or cause temporary discomfort to a person. “Peace officer” has the meaning given in Minn. Stat. § 626.84, Subd. 1.”

Force - The application of physical techniques or tactics, chemical agents or weapons to another person. It is not a use of force when a person allows him/herself to be searched, escorted, handcuffed or restrained.

Great Bodily Harm or Serious Physical Injury - Bodily injury which creates a high probability of death, or which causes a permanent disfigurement, or which causes a permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ or other serious bodily harm.

Less Lethal Force - Force applied through the use of extended range kinetic energy impact devices that have less potential for causing death or serious physical injury than deadly force.

Non-Deadly Force - Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force.

Reasonable Grounds or Reasonably Knows or Reasonable Belief - When facts or circumstances the officer believes, knows, or should know, are such as to cause an ordinary and prudent officer to act or think in a similar manner under similar circumstances.

Use of Deadly Force - Defined in Minn. Stat. § 609.066, Subd. 2., as: “Notwithstanding the provisions of Minn. Stat. § 609.06 or § 609.065, the use of deadly force by a peace officer in the line of duty is justified only when necessary: 1) To protect the peace officer or another from apparent death or great bodily harm; 2) To effect the arrest or capture, or prevent the escape, of a person whom the peace officer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony involving the use or threatened use of deadly force; or 3) To effect the arrest or capture, or prevent the escape, of a person whom the officer knows or has reasonable grounds

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to believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony if the officer reasonably believes that the person will cause death or great bodily harm if the person's apprehension is delayed."

300.2 POLICY

The use of force by law enforcement personnel is a matter of critical concern, both to the public and to the law enforcement community. Officers are involved on a daily basis in numerous and varied interactions and, when warranted, may use reasonable force in carrying out their duties.

Officers must have an understanding of, and true appreciation for, their authority and limitations. This is especially true with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties.

The Department recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests.

300.2.1 DUTY TO INTERCEDE

Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force. An officer who observes another employee use force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor.

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Officers shall use only that amount of force that is reasonably necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

The reasonableness of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene at the time of the incident. Any evaluation of reasonableness must allow for the fact that officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force that is reasonably necessary in a particular situation, with limited information and in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving.

Given that no policy can realistically predict every possible situation an officer might encounter, officers are entrusted to use well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate use of force in each incident.

It is also recognized that circumstances may arise in which officers reasonably believe that it would be impractical or ineffective to use any of the tools, weapons or methods provided by the Department. Officers may find it more effective or reasonable to improvise their response to rapidly unfolding conditions that they are confronting. In such circumstances, the use of any improvised device or method must nonetheless be reasonable and utilized only to the degree that reasonably appears necessary to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

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While the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter is to avoid or minimize injury, nothing in this policy requires an officer to retreat or be exposed to possible physical injury before applying reasonable force.

300.3.1 USE OF FORCE TO EFFECT AN ARREST

An officer may use reasonable force (Minn. Stat. § 609.06 and Minn. Stat. § 629.33):

- (a) In effecting a lawful arrest.
- (b) In the execution of a legal process.
- (c) In enforcing an order of the court.
- (d) In executing any other duty imposed by law.
- (e) In preventing the escape, or to retake following the escape, of a person lawfully held on a charge or conviction of a crime.
- (f) In restraining a person with a mental illness or a person with a developmental disability from self-injury or injury to another.
- (g) In self defense or defense of another.

An officer who makes or attempts to make an arrest need not retreat or desist from his/her efforts by reason of resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested; nor shall such officer be deemed the aggressor or lose his/her right to self-defense by the use of reasonable force to effect the arrest or to prevent escape or to overcome resistance.

300.3.2 FACTORS USED TO DETERMINE THE REASONABLENESS OF FORCE

When determining whether to apply force and evaluating whether an officer has used reasonable force, a number of factors should be taken into consideration, as time and circumstances permit. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Immediacy and severity of the threat to officers or others.
- (b) The conduct of the individual being confronted, as reasonably perceived by the officer at the time.
- (c) Officer/subject factors (age, size, relative strength, skill level, injuries sustained, level of exhaustion or fatigue, the number of officers available vs. subjects).
- (d) The effects of drugs or alcohol.
- (e) Subject's mental state or capacity.
- (f) Proximity of weapons or dangerous improvised devices.
- (g) The degree to which the subject has been effectively restrained and his/her ability to resist despite being restrained.
- (h) The availability of other options and their possible effectiveness.

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- (i) Seriousness of the suspected offense or reason for contact with the individual.
- (j) Training and experience of the officer.
- (k) Potential for injury to officers, suspects and others.
- (l) Whether the person appears to be resisting, attempting to evade arrest by flight or is attacking the officer.
- (m) The risk and reasonably foreseeable consequences of escape.
- (n) The apparent need for immediate control of the subject or a prompt resolution of the situation.
- (o) Whether the conduct of the individual being confronted no longer reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to the officer or others.
- (p) Prior contacts with the subject or awareness of any propensity for violence.
- (q) Any other exigent circumstances.

300.3.3 PAIN COMPLIANCE TECHNIQUES

Pain compliance techniques may be effective in controlling a physically or actively resisting individual. Officers may only apply those pain compliance techniques for which they have successfully completed department-approved training. Officers utilizing any pain compliance technique should consider:

- (a) The degree to which the application of the technique may be controlled given the level of resistance.
- (b) Whether the person can comply with the direction or orders of the officer.
- (c) Whether the person has been given sufficient opportunity to comply.

The application of any pain compliance technique shall be discontinued once the officer determines that compliance has been achieved.

300.3.4 CAROTID CONTROL

Officers will not use chokeholds or vascular neck restraints to subdue or control individuals unless deadly force is authorized per statute. Additionally, under no circumstances may any officer continue to use force (except mere physical restraint) against an individual who has ceased to resist.

300.3.5 USE OF FORCE TO SEIZE EVIDENCE

In general, officers may use reasonable force to lawfully seize evidence and to prevent the destruction of evidence. However, officers are discouraged from using force solely to prevent a person from swallowing evidence or contraband. In the instance when force is used, officers should not intentionally use any technique that restricts blood flow to the head, restricts respiration or which creates a reasonable likelihood that blood flow to the head or respiration would be

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restricted. Officers are encouraged to use techniques and methods taught by the Burnsville Police Department for this specific purpose.

300.4 DEADLY FORCE

Use of deadly force (Minn. Stat. § 609.066 Subd. 2) is justified in the following circumstances:

Notwithstanding the provisions of section [609.06](#) (Authorized Use of Force) or [609.065](#) (Justifiable Taking of Life), the use of deadly force by a peace officer in the line of duty is justified only when necessary:

- (1) to protect the peace officer or another from apparent death or great bodily harm;
- (2) to effect the arrest or capture, or prevent the escape, of a person whom the peace officer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony involving the use or threatened use of deadly force; or
- (3) to effect the arrest or capture, or prevent the escape, of a person whom the officer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony if the officer reasonably believes that the person will cause death or great bodily harm if the person's apprehension is delayed.

300.4.1 SHOOTING AT OR FROM MOVING VEHICLES

Shots fired at or from a moving vehicle involve all the dangers associated with discharging firearms. Officers should attempt to move out of the path of an approaching vehicle instead of discharging their firearm at the vehicle or any of its occupants. An officer should only discharge a firearm at a moving vehicle or its occupants when the officer reasonably believes there are no other reasonable means available to avert the threat of the vehicle.

Officers should avoid firing weapons from a moving vehicle except in circumstances permitting the use of deadly force and after careful consideration of the possibility of collateral injury or death. Firing a weapon at a moving vehicle from a stationary position must conform to the use of deadly force parameters outlined in this chapter.

300.5 REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE

Any use of force greater than an escort hold by a member of this Department shall be documented promptly, completely and accurately in an appropriate report, depending on the nature of the incident. The officer should articulate the factors perceived and why he/she believed the use of force was reasonable under the circumstances. To collect data for purposes of training, resource allocation, analysis and related purposes, the Department may require the completion of additional report forms, as specified in department policy, procedure or law.

300.5.1 NOTIFICATION TO SUPERVISORS

Supervisory notification shall be made as soon as practicable following the application of force in any of the following circumstances:

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- (a) The application caused a visible injury.
- (b) The application would lead a reasonable officer to conclude that the individual may have experienced more than momentary discomfort.
- (c) The individual subjected to the force complained of injury or continuing pain.
- (d) The individual indicates intent to pursue litigation.
- (e) Any application of a TASER (TM) device or control device.
- (f) Any application of a restraint device other than handcuffs, shackles or belly chains.
- (g) The individual subjected to the force was rendered unconscious.
- (h) An individual was struck or kicked.
- (i) An individual alleges any of the above has occurred.
- (j) When an officer discharges a firearm outside the firing range (not to include recreational or animal destruction incidents).
- (k) When an officer points a Taser at or in the direction of an individual with use of the laser red-dot.
- (l) When use of force results, or is alleged to have resulted, in death or injury.
- (m) When any deadly, less lethal, or non-deadly force weapon is used on a person, the display of any of these weapons alone need not be documented.
- (n) When force is used beyond routine escort procedures to control a resisting combative subject.
- (o) When any Department action results in non-employee injury or death.

300.6 MEDICAL CONSIDERATION

Prior to booking or release, medical assistance shall be obtained for any person who exhibits signs of physical distress, who has sustained visible injury, expresses a complaint of injury or continuing pain, or who was rendered unconscious. Any individual exhibiting signs of physical distress after an encounter should be continuously monitored until he/she can be medically assessed.

Based upon the officer's initial assessment of the nature and extent of the subject's injuries, medical assistance may consist of examination by fire personnel, paramedics, hospital staff or medical staff at the jail. If any such individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal shall be fully documented in related reports and, whenever practicable, should be witnessed by another officer and/or medical personnel. If a recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included in the recording, if possible.

The on-scene supervisor or, if the on-scene supervisor is not available, the primary handling officer shall ensure that any person providing medical care or receiving custody of a person following any use of force is informed that the person was subjected to force. This notification shall include a description of the force used and any other circumstances the officer reasonably believes would

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be potential safety or medical risks to the subject (e.g., prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration).

Persons who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond their physical characteristics and imperviousness to pain (sometimes called “excited delirium”), or who require a protracted physical encounter with multiple officers to be brought under control, may be at an increased risk of sudden death. Calls involving these persons should be considered medical emergencies. Officers who reasonably suspect a medical emergency should request medical assistance as soon as practicable and have medical personnel stage away if appropriate.

300.7 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY

When a supervisor is able to respond to an incident in which there has been a reported application of force, the supervisor is expected to:

- (a) Obtain the basic facts from the involved officers. Absent an allegation of misconduct or excessive force, this will be considered a routine contact in the normal course of duties.
- (b) Ensure that any injured parties are examined and treated.
- (c) Once any initial medical assessment has been completed or first aid has been rendered, ensure that photographs have been taken of any areas involving visible injury or complaint of pain, as well as overall photographs of uninjured areas. These photographs should be retained until all potential for civil litigation has expired.
- (d) Identify any witnesses not already included in related reports.
- (e) Review and approve all related reports.
- (f) If there is an indication of potential civil litigation, the supervisor should notify the Division Commander.
- (g) Evaluate the circumstances surrounding the incident. If there is a question of policy non-compliance, further investigation may be appropriate.

In the event that a supervisor is unable to respond to the scene of an incident involving the reported application of force, the supervisor is still expected to complete as many of the above items as circumstances permit.

300.7.1 WATCH COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITY

The Watch Commander shall review each use of force by any personnel within his/her command to ensure compliance with this policy and to address any training issues.

300.8 TRAINING

Officers will receive training on this policy, including the learning objectives as provided by POST, at least annually (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452, Subd. 3).

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300.9 USE OF FORCE ANALYSIS

At least annually, the Patrol Division Commander should prepare an analysis report on use of force incidents. The report should be submitted to the Chief of Police. The report should not contain the names of officers, suspects or case numbers. The report shall be reviewed by the Division Commander and Use of Force Instructor team to analyze:

- (a) The identification of any trends in the use of force by members.
- (b) Training needs recommendations.
- (c) Equipment needs recommendations.
- (d) Policy revision recommendations.